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PENCE CHILD INTERNET BILL ONE STEP CLOSER TO PRESIDENT'S DESK

Truth in Domain Bill Included in Child Abduction Legislation Passed by House

Washington, Apr 10, 2003 - WASHINGTON, DC – As a part of the Child Abduction Prevention Act, legislation authored by Congressman Mike Pence to protect minors from Internet porn cleared its final hurdle today and now heads to the White House where it awaits President Bush's signature.

Pence's amendment, Truth in Domain Names, a cornerstone of his legislative agenda, would punish those who use misleading domain names to attract children to sexually explicit Internet sites. If convicted, offenders could be fined up to \$250,000 and/or imprisoned for up to two years.

"The moment President Bush signs this bill the Internet will become safer for children, families and teachers," said Pence, a member of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Courts, the Internet and Intellectual Property.

"As millions of Americans do each night, I often help my young children with their homework," said Pence. "What all too often happens, as we surf the web for useful information to help learn about history and government and science, my young children have the most innocent of intentions and will type in domain names that are absolutely harmless. What pops up, however, isn't. Many times we are taken to sites full of smut, profanity and pornography.

"There is currently no law on the books that protects children from criminals who choose to prey on them using deceptive names," said Pence.

“My amendment would change that. The minute the President signs this bill, using a misleading domain name with the intent to deceive a person into viewing obscenity on the Internet will be considered a criminal act,” said Pence.

The conference report will now be considered by the U.S. Senate before being forwarded to the White House for the President's signature.

A survey conducted in 2000 by the Crimes Against Children Research Center (CARC) found that 71 percent of teens had accidentally come across inappropriate sexual material on the Internet. In 1999 alone, one out of four minors was exposed to sexually explicit images at least once. Last year before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, an FBI spokesman pointed out that pedophiles often lure children into viewing pornography ‘to encourage their victims to engage in sex.’

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